

**September Meeting****Friday, September 19
7:00 PM****Auction**

**Our Savior's Lutheran
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The second, and last, club auction of the year will be held on Friday, September 19th. The doors open for setup at 6:00 pm. The auction starts at 7:00, an hour earlier than the usual meeting time, and ends promptly at 10:00. There will be no VE exams this month.

Presidential QRM**By Sam Lipson, KO6JR**

It is apparent from the August 15th meeting that the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club is at a crossroads. Comments from this meeting are being taken into consideration and will be (have been) discussed at the September Board Meeting. Proposals will be shared with the membership, as requested, to allow greater participation in this process. This Board was elected by you to make decisions on behalf of the club to better it for all involved. This last meeting showed me that the membership expects a democracy, when in reality, this club is a representative republic. However, it also became apparent to this president that the Board may not be representative of the membership. I urge you to let your elected Board know what your feelings are; communicate with them and participate in the fact finding process. I also strongly suggest that greater participation from the membership prior to presentations by the Board would make the decision making process work more smoothly. We all knew that these decisions would have to be made. They were actively discussed in presentations made to the membership over the last few months. All that said, we hope that we will make a strong transition through these crossroads and come out a stronger amateur radio club than we were before.

This month is the Auction. Come to the meeting with your checkbook open ready to find that special item which will add to your shack. Also, if you have radio related items which you no longer need, bring them to the auction and let someone bid on them for their shack. 10% of all sales (and 100% of donations) go to the club.

October is Pacificon and October is quickly approaching. Get involved with the Pacificon committee and help make this Pacificon the best ever.

Lastly, remember, there will be NO exams in September due to the auction.

Wishing you good propagation,

73, Sam, KO6JR

...At Your Service**By Charles Arthur, KQ6FH**

As many of you already know, a kit-building program has been initiated within the club. This has been rather limited, building a specialized radio kit and while all were invited to participate, only a few showed interest. This has led me to think that a wider scope of activity would be appreciated by the club. I have been approached by both club members and non-club members who have voiced their ideas for a future project. Here is the gist of their thoughts.

There was an article in the July issue of QST magazine entitled "CW with your HT" (pg. 53). It has been proposed that since so many Technicians own 2-meter HT's, this would be a great way to provide morse code training for those interested in upgrading. The device presented in this article could be used with just about any HT. It's basically an audio oscillator and keying circuit that allows you to send modulated CW (MCW) through your HT. The article highlights a straight key. I am not able to use a straight key with any degree of success so with the help of the kit-building group, a circuit has been designed that could be used as a keyer. Both circuits are now being tested.

Now here's where you come in. Take a look at the article and decide if this is for you. Would you like to learn code in a fun way while socializing at the same time? Would you build a simple kit? Would you support a simplex net for learning the code? (By support I mean checking into the net on a regular basis with enough patience for a bunch of beginners.)

If you have an interest in such a project but have no idea where to start, drop me a line
continued on page 7

Inside

From the Repeater Committee .	2
Ramblings from the Editor	2
MDARC Meeting Minutes	3
Copper Cactus Day	6
Nets	7



Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club W6CX

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The Carrier is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available.

All material must be submitted to the editor by the first of day of the month of publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to w6uv@wco.com (preferred), or delivered to the editor at the address listed below. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII, Word for Windows, or WordPerfect format. Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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From the Repeater Committee

By Jim Brunk, Chairman

Ok, so What Happened?

At the August MDARC Board meeting the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group was dissolved. During a lengthy discussion on funding the group, several issues came up. It was noted that the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group was a committee of MDARC and was ultimately under the jurisdiction of the Board. Also noted was that the Club had voted to supplement the group's funds so that they could continue to operate during the balance of the year. Several ideas were aired with dissolution being the final solution. There were no votes on the motion. After the dissolution, a Repeater Operations Committee (ROC) was formed. The President asked that I chair the committee. The committee held its first meeting on the evening of August 13th. During the MDARC general meeting on the 15th, the committee was renamed to Rocky Ridge Repeater Committee (RRRC).

Technical Committee a.k.a. ROC a.k.a. RRRC

The new committee met and started to organize itself. Jack Beck, KE6TIP, Jim Brunk, N6BHX, Howard Burk, KE6PTT, Jay Caldis, KT6Y, Bert Dawson, KB7BGM, Keith Lattin, N6PMF, Jim Tittle, KC6SOE, and Barry Winkler, KC6WYA indicated that they would serve on this committee. The duties of the committee are these:

1. Equipment Installation and Maintenance.
2. License Responsibility.
3. NARCC and other Group Representation.
4. Operating Rules and Guidelines.
5. Assignment and Management of Control Operators
6. Resolution of Repeater Misuse Situations.

Barry was named Technical Manager and Howard was named Chief Control Operator.

All interested MDARC members are encouraged to join us. We meet on the first Saturday of the month. The September meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m. September 6th at the Baker's Square on Willow Pass Road in Concord.

So, What does this all Mean?

The primary impact of all this activity is financial. All the group's assets and obligations were turned over to the main club. Because of this, there will not be separate repeater dues as there were in the past. There may be some sort of adjustment to the MDARC dues to cover the repeater operations. During the MDARC general meeting, there was considerable discussion about changing the dues structure with several suggestions about how to accomplish the funding of the Club. The other impact is that there are no longer any officers or meetings. All policy will now be made at the MDARC Board level.

Other than these changes, there should be no differences in how the repeaters operate. If there are questions about repeater function, call Barry at 510-427-2121 (or page him at 510-753-2668). For operation questions call Howard at 510-798-7208. There is a list of control operators on the inside back page of the Membership Directory.

Ramblings From The Editor

By Jerry Gardner, W6UV

I find it hard to believe that so many members took offense at what amounts to a name change of a working committee and a dues increase. Sure, the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group as we knew it exists no more, but what is the loss? The repeaters will continue to be managed and operated by the same group of people under a different name. Let's move on.

Regarding the dues increase, I can see how some can take exception to it. After all, the Board is proposing to more than double the current dues. But

continued on page 7

MDARC General Meeting Minutes

August 15, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 8 p.m. by President Sam Lipson, KO6JR, who introduced visitors and upgrades. VE's administered nine elements, resulting in six passes, including Joey Simon, KF6ACO to Advanced. New classes will begin September 9 at Pleasant Hill Adult Education Center.

Vice President Cal, KE6OEI, announced plans for upcoming programs.

Treasurer Greg, KE6VTA, reported a bank balance of \$22,586.

Mike, KE6JGA, gave a rundown of upcoming public service events which still need volunteers. There are also RACES members who have not updated their Disaster Service Worker forms. Please see Mike if you have not updated your form.

Lauren, WA6CIE, announced that approximately 3900 points were accumulated in Field Day activities. Lauren is also looking for people to run for office next year, so please see him if you are interested in running.

Jeff, KE6QYM, reported a current total of 554 MDARC members, including 239 RRRG members.

Jerry, W6UV, said that the *Carrier* deadline is Saturday, August 30.

Greg, KE6VTA, invited the membership to the Pacifcon committee meeting tomorrow (Saturday, August 16) at Baker's Square in Concord. Pacifcon tickets are now available.

President Sam addressed the decision of the Board of Directors at the August 4 board meeting to formally disband the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group and incorporate repeater operations into MDARC as a Repeater Operations Committee. This change was necessary to continue funding repeater operations under the increased rent structure. It was deemed appropriate by the board to have the entire membership share repeater cost, since the repeater is used by many members who are not RRRG members. The RRRG budget will be absorbed into the MDARC budget and stands as it is for the remainder of the year. A proposal was formulated by the board for a revised dues structure. President Sam introduced Treasurer Greg to discuss the financial aspects of the proposal.

Treasurer Greg, KE6VTA, presented the final 1997 MDARC budget, as amended:

For 1997, the club spent \$2975 of Pacifcon money to finance club activities. The final 1997 MDARC budget with repeater supplement for rent increase results in a negative \$4300.

A proposed 1998 budget would result in an excess of \$2300 if the following dues structure is implemented: 400 regular members @ \$40; 100 family members @ \$50; 10 students @ \$20. Greg presented several additional scenarios.

President Sam elaborated on the board's August 4 meeting, as detailed in handout to members present. With the new tower and resulting increased maintenance costs, RRRG is unable to be self supporting. The repeater is used by most members. Autopatch is only used by RRRG. A majority of club members are RRRG members. Most of the funds used to replace the antennas on Mt. Diablo came from MDARC dues. Some RRRG functions are redundant with MDARC. Therefore, the board agreed to combine the RRRG treasurer function and the MDARC function into one and to establish a Repeater Operations Committee which is responsible for the following:

1. Equipment installation and maintenance
2. License responsibility;
3. NARCC representation;
4. Operating rules and guidelines;

5. Assignment and management of control operators; and
6. Resolution of repeater misuse situations.

MDARC would now be responsible for

1. All funding for the repeaters and associated equipment.
2. Auto slot assignments. All members would be entitled to an auto slot.
3. Appointment of Repeater Operations Committee chairperson.

The decision was made to make the structural changes effective immediately because further financial burden on MDARC by the Repeater Committee with no authority seemed to be the wrong decision.

Dick Brown, KT6X, added that there was a lot of discussion about value received. Why was the repeater club originally formed? Years ago, when it was formed, there was a small group funding the repeater club. Now most of the club is in RRRG. The extra dues give very little added value to RRRG members—just autopatch.

President Sam opened the floor to discussion of the projected dues structure of 400 regular memberships @ \$40; 100 family memberships @ \$50; and 10 student memberships @ \$20. Members present were invited to take turns at the podium to voice their opinions.

Lauren, WA6CIE, said that he would like to see the name of the repeater operations committee changed back to Rocky Ridge, and annual dues increased to \$20. The only exception is that Rocky Ridge will not be having a small meeting. He would like for autopatch to be available for \$25 annual dues. He is against an increase to \$40. He would like a \$10 student rate and a reduced rate for seniors. The club could cut costs by not mailing *Carriers* to those who can access from Internet. Those who do not have access to Internet can still receive the newsletter by mail. He does not feel that the *Carrier* should be published less frequently, because when other clubs have tried less frequent publication a loss of cohesiveness resulted.

Glenn, KJ6EN, raised the issue of the clause in the contract allowing for a three percent annual rate increase. Since the attendance at a monthly meeting is approximately ten percent of the membership, he would like to have the proposal mailed out to all members in ballot form. (However, the bylaws state that the only requirement for passage is the vote of a simple majority of those present at a monthly meeting.)

Paul, N6JOX, urged the lowering of youth dues to \$10 or less for those who are not included in a family membership, to encourage participation by young hams.

Jim, KC6SOE, does not feel that the decision made by the board on August 4 was representative of the desires of the members of both organizations.

Richard, WA5HQJ, does not have a problem with the dissolution of Rocky Ridge but does have a problem with the proposed dues structure and feels that the club should make a greater effort to reduce expenses rather than raising dues to such an extent. Richard handed out his analysis, calling for a \$5 increase to \$20, and attempting to reconstruct costs to return to a pre-Pacifcon level. His concern is whether we could continue to function if we decide not to hold Pacifcon one year.

Vicki, N6KLS, also does not believe that the dues should be raised to \$40, and feels that a senior discount should be addressed. She feels that we will lose members at \$40 and that we should look for options to reduce the repeater rent, such as removing some of the systems. More research should be done before making a decision, using some of the capital from Pacifcon if necessary until a solid decision can be reached. She also feels that the decision should be

made by ballot.

Barry, KC6WYA, does not feel that the repeater should be funded by members who do not use it, and feels that an increase to \$25 would be adequate. He would like to continue to offer the option to belong to just the main club, or to the main club plus the repeater group.

Mac, KE6ZZG, asked whether all proposals will be published in the *Carrier*. Sam will entertain a motion to that effect.

Jim, N6BHX, recognized those who have contributed to keeping the repeater operational over the years. New assignments include Barry, KC6WYA, Technical Manager, and Howard, KE6PTT, Chief Control Operator, with other control operators agreeing to stay.

Terry, KE6WRE, feels that even with the dues increase, membership is still a bargain. However, people should pay for services they use and not for services they do not. He would like to see a dues structure which gives a break to young members and seniors.

Paul, WB6DHH, feels that we should put our best face forward, even if it means a dues increase, and not let money issues disrupt the club. He would like to see all proposals published in the *Carrier*.

Rusty, KC6WXX, does not have a problem with the money, but does have a problem with the Board of Directors making the decision for all members.

Dick, AA6DL, said that we should live within our budget, using Pacificon income

for extras such as scholarships. He believes that most of our seniors can afford the dues and does not want to see unnecessary complications added to the dues structure.

President Sam asked for motions from the floor.

Jim, KC6SOE, made a motion to retain the name Rocky Ridge Repeater Group and rename the Repeater Operations Committee the Rocky Ridge Repeater Committee.

Paul, WB6DHH, does not feel that we need to do this. He does not feel that the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group has gone away, and does not know how the board made the unilateral decision to dissolve the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group.

President Sam said that the decision was

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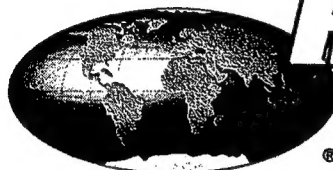
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made to dissolve the functioning committee of the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group and transfer the financial responsibility of the group to the current club budget.

Paul, WB6DHH, said that the board has the privilege of dissolving any committee it chooses. Because of the financial status, it was decided that the Rocky Ridge Repeater Group could not continue to exist as it currently does.

President Sam reminded the group that the meeting was a joint meeting of the MDARC board and the RRRG committee.

Rusty, KC6WXX, asked why he had to pay dues to a committee that was run like a club, requiring a sponsor to join.

Paul, WB6DHH, said that it was originally set up that way so that they knew to whom they were granting privileges of operation. The change is just a shift of responsibility.

Jim, N6BHX, said that when RRRG was formed, HT's were new and not everyone was interested. As time went on, repeater operation became more important.

Paul, WB6DHH, in answer to Mac's question of how RRRG was first created, gave some history behind the operation of the repeater. The very first repeater was installed on Smith Hill near the 24/680 split. Then it was upgraded and moved to Rocky Ridge. There was still a group of people in the club who wanted to participate. It was always just a committee—not a club within a club. From Rocky Ridge, the repeater was moved to Mt. Diablo due to an interference problem which could not be resolved.

Jay, KT6Y, added to Paul's history, by saying that the first repeater was built by six people who brought it to a club meeting to donate

it and offered to maintain it.

President Sam, call for the question: Will the Repeater Operations Committee name be changed to Rocky Ridge Repeater Committee? The "ayes" prevail.

Motion by Richard, WA5HQJ: In view of all of the information that has been provided, the motion is made that the board take the information and come back with a plan for a revised dues structure. Seconded. Carried.

Paul, WB6DHH, suggests that the *Carrier* be used extensively to keep the members informed.

Barry, KC6WYA, agreed with Richard that all plans should go back to the board for review and careful study.

Floor call for the question.

Don, W6NKF, asked for an amendment—that all proposals for dues increases be published in the *Carrier*. President Sam said that the bylaws call for two publications.

Paul, WB6DHH, made a motion that the board keep us informed fully.

Lauren, WA6CIE, said that there are several proposals on the floor and asked for the members who have made proposals to write them up and submit them to the board for consideration. Lauren made a motion that all proposals be written up to include with the ballot at the same time officers are elected. Seconded.

President Sam said that the board has been asked to come back with a revised proposal. He believes the motion made is asking for a time limit which means that proposals be published in the November *Carrier*. All proposals must be published in the September

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Carrier. (if possible) He feels that there is a conflict between the current motion and the one passed previously.

Concern was expressed that too many proposals cannot be voted on by the entire membership. Jay, KT6Y, said that the board of directors is supposed to make such decisions, and the entire membership cannot vote on every item. Lew, K5QXX, is also opposed to presenting multiple choices to the entire membership, and feels that the board should be allowed to do its job.

Dick, AA6DL, current motion?

President Sam: Bring all proposals to vote on the ballot in November.

Paul, WB6DHH: To summarize, make all information available to all members. The board would decide upon which to bring for a vote.

Dick, AA6DL: Is this motion to not have the board propose any dues increase until the entire membership votes? (Some agree, some disagree.)

Lauren accepted this premise, stating that if the issue does not come to a vote in November, there is no general meeting in December, leaving the club with no mechanism to collect dues for the repeater for next year. Upon request, Lauren withdrew his motion.

Greg, KE6VTA, announced that the next board meeting will be on September 8 at 7:30. *The location has been changed to Baker's Square on Willow Pass, because of a conflict in room reservations at Emil Villa's.*

Howard, KE6PTT, made a motion that we reinstate the Rocky Ridge committee as it was prior to August 4 and vote at the next meeting upon whether to keep or dissolve. Seconded. Not a valid motion.

Harvey, KM6AH, asked whether the balance of RRRG dues will be refunded.

President Sam replied that they will not, as the balance was transferred to the MDARC budget.

Barry, KC6WYA, asked that the board go back and continue Rocky Ridge until December 31 of this year and give the members of RRRG a chance to vote on the matter.

Rufus, N6NFR, made the motion to table the discussion until the next meeting. Passed.

President Sam said that since the September meeting is an auction, the discussion will continue at the October meeting. We have no dues structure to support anything at this time except the general membership. (Killed the motion—tabled the discussion.)

Due to the lengthy discussion, the planned program was cancelled.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna A. Cook, KE6PPM

Copper Cactus Day

By Tom and Tommy Ciaramitaro

Enthusiasm and energy were at a peak when six young men and a dad met to build copper cactuses (cacti?) to increase the range of their HTs. The initial talks had begun a couple months before, so when the BIG DAY came, everyone was ready.

Armed with three different plans provided by George, KQ6IQ; John, AC6LV; and a QST article, we began. Antenna builders were Chris, AC6KE; Tommy, KF6HLN; Daniel, KF6HLM; Michael, KF6DVM; and Ethan, KF6DSW (now K Q 6 P E).

Lester, KD6HJA; and Tom, KF6HLL (the dad) provided encouragement and a tip here and there. Daniel and Ethan worked on the double cactus design; Chris and Michael made a standard cactus; and Tommy built a modified single cactus per George's plans.

Starting with seven 10-foot lengths of half-inch copper pipe and various fittings, the measuring began on a three by eight foot work table. Tubing cutters made the cuts clean and true. Most of the young men, ages 13 to 17, measured twice and cut once (grandpa's old proverb). These guys could hardly wait for the next step—bringing on the propane torches! Daniel had taken a welding class and Tom had done a little amateur plumbing around the house, so the pipe fitting and soldering went quite well. It's amazing how flux can make something so unwilling as solder flow smoothly and neatly into each joint.

Things were going quite smoothly—Lester was scanning the AES and HRO catalogs, dreaming away; Christopher stepped on a tube of flux and it squished out on the driveway like toothpaste, where some other unwitting builder later stepped. The first challenge came in

mounting and connecting the SO-239 connectors to the copper tubing. All that copper works well as a heat sink, so we discovered that a soldering gun was not quite sufficient to heat the flange of the connector and the pipe at the same time. The torch emerged again as the tool of choice, but when used without some care the bakelite insulator on the SO-239 began bubbling and oozing out. It ended up looking like a small hot dog. "Got any more SO-239's?" What worked best was to heat the pipe mostly and the flange lastly. The center conductor was soldered across to the radiating element with a #12 copper wire. We found that drilling the pipe for the copper wire before soldering it allowed a better mechanical connection and then a quick dab of heat to the center of the SO-239 saved the bakelite. The one article from QST could have prepared us for this a little better.

Beware of plans that say, "...all you need to do is..." or "Just do this..."

Lunch took us away from construction for a time. Amidst the crunch of tortilla chips the patio was abuzz with chatter about radios, antennas, and the

like. The excitement had not subsided in the least. It was time to do some final assembly and... TESTING!

I think Christopher was the first to hook radio to masterpiece and perform a test. Michael was sure the SWR meter was not working when the needle barely lifted off the 1:1 stop. SWR was very flat across two meters, no more than 1.2 to 1. On 440 it did rise a little above 2:1 but Daniel was delighted with the ease in getting into some of the more distant repeaters. 146.670, usually unreachable from the driveway with a rubber duck, was a cinch. Michael's SWR seemed higher than the others at nearly 2:1 but we discovered that his soldering had resulted in the two elements being slightly askew—not perfectly parallel. After a little adjusting, all was well.

Each antenna performed very well. We didn't have the ability to check the merits of each design with precision, but the



NETS

W6CX Nets

APRS Net Tuesdays 1930 Hours
 147.060/+ (100 pl)
 Net Control: Barry, KC6WYA

Phone Net Thursdays 1930 Hours
 147.060/+ (100 pl)
 Net Control: Jay Caldis, KT6Y

ATV Net Thursdays 2000 Hours
 Net Control: Mike Burke, KB6RMT
 Alternate: Sylvia, KC6YJV

Youth Net Thursdays 1900 Hours
 147.060/+ (100 pl)
 Net Control: Jeff Burke, KE6YAW

Contra Costa County Emergency Services HF Net

First Thursday following first Wednesday, 2000 Hours, 3.895 MHz. Net Control: Richard Shappee, WA5HQJ

Sheriff's Amateur Radio Communications Team

Clay Yale, N6YBQ
 (510) 228-8223

Contra Costa County ARES/RACES Nets

Thursdays, 1900 Hours

Central County 145.680 Simplex
 Jim Brunk*, N6BHX
 (510) 372-8248

East County 146.535 Simplex
 Jim Tittle*, KC6SOE
 (510) 432-3220

South County 146.355/+ (100 pl)
 Ed Ritchie*, K6SFD
 (510) 837-3265

West County 145.110/-
 Rich Parker*, KD6JCT
 (510) 237-2777

QSY to 147.735/- at 1920 Hours

Meeting of all County ARES/RACES Nets

Sam Lipson, District Emergency Coordinator, KO6JR
 (510) 229-5705

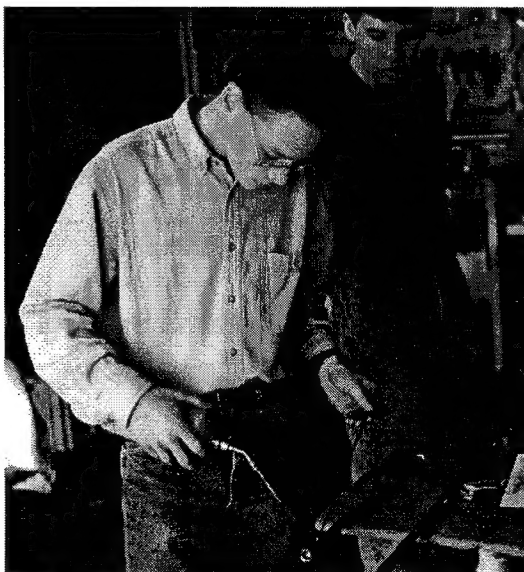
* Assistant District Emergency Coordinator

Copper Cactus Day

continued from page 6

double cactus seemed to be the most effective in some brief simplex testing.

Ultimately, each young man had learned some good lessons in working with copper pipe, and for less than \$20 went home with an outstanding antenna. A very worthwhile day. So what can we all get together and build next? A 50 watt amplifier? That 21 element beam? We'll just have to see...



...At Your Service

continued from page 1

by mail, phone me, contact me at the meeting, or on the air. If there is indeed the interest that has been stated by some, I will schedule a class or series of classes so we may begin building and learning. Frankly, I have already begun my project and will soon have an operating model up and running. But it's no fun without others to play with. So how about it? Will this be your next project?

Elections are coming up and we need to give some thought to the way things are done in our club. It is my intention to resign as MDARC Emergency Coordinator at the end of the year. I believe that others should have the exposure to running a club and strongly recommend you consider this position. Let the nominating committee know that you are willing to take part in the club's operation. Give them your name for nomination. There's no magic about it and it's very satisfying to give back something to the club.

Wishing you all good transmissions, 73, Charles.

Ramblings From The Editor

continued from page 2

look at the services the club provides for your dues. Fifteen dollars doesn't go very far today. I've frequently heard comparisons between MDARC and the CCRA. The CCRA dues are \$50 a year and all you get for your \$50 is access to a repeater system. There's no newsletter, education program, Field Day activities, or any of the other services provided by MDARC to its members.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 8	7:30 pm	MDARC Board Meeting	Baker's Square, Concord
September 19	7:00 pm	MDARC Auction	Our Savior's Lutheran Church 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette
September 20	8:00 am	Pacificon General Meeting	Baker's Square, Concord Saturday following 3 rd Friday
September 27		October <i>Carrier</i> Deadline	
October 5	7:00 am-Noon	Livermore Swapmeet	Las Positas College, Livermore 1st Sunday every month
October 5	1:00 pm	Sunnyvale VEC Exams Gene Capener, WW6H, 510-254-5090	Consolidated Fire Training Center 2945 Treat Blvd., Concord 1st Sunday even months

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MDARC Meeting: September 19

